

# **City of Rockville Environment Commission**

## **Sustainable Development and Energy Committee (SDEC)**

### **Meeting Minutes**

**Tuesday, October 18, 2011**

**Diamondback Terrapin Room, City Hall**

**7:00 pm**

#### **1. Welcome / Agenda Review/Minutes Adoption**

- In attendance: Clark Reed, John Becker and staff liaison Erica Shingara.
- The meeting convened at 7:05. Erica Shingara reported that several members had conflicts and could not attend the meeting.

#### **2. Environment Commission Report**

- The Commission's strategic planning retreat was held on October 15. The Commission brainstormed a lengthy list of potential activities; many items support certification through the Sustainable Maryland Certified program. Items related to the SDEC include a kill-a-watt crackdown to decrease energy consumption, energy disclosure requirements for commercial buildings, and a solar challenge. The Commission will be prioritizing the items.
- The next meeting will be held on November 8<sup>th</sup> at 30 Courthouse Square.

#### **3. Environmental Management Division Report**

- Staff attended a Solar Energy Workshop hosted by the Metropolitan Council of Governments (COG). The program presented information on technology, markets and financing mechanisms. A community solar guide was distributed:  
[http://solaramericacommunities.energy.gov/resources/guide\\_for\\_local\\_governments/](http://solaramericacommunities.energy.gov/resources/guide_for_local_governments/)
- High Performance Building Tax credit- the proposal was sent to Finance and the Environment Commission for comments. Revisions include requiring ENERGY STAR certification for the entire tax credit period and simplifying the administration process. The proposal will be discussed at the November 8<sup>th</sup> Commission meeting.
- A draft regional sustainable home self-certification checklist compiled by the COG was distributed for comments.
  - Herb Winkler suggested via email to include composting, use of zip cars, and a gradient rating system that awards more points for living closer to work (<5, <15, <25 miles).
  - Clark Reed suggested that a performance based approach is more effective than a checklist. Recommended using EPA's Energy Yardstick as a tool for assessing home energy efficiency. Erica Shingara will attend a meeting November 7 to determine the next steps and see if the program will feature an energy/sustainability dashboard.
- Green Power Community Challenge: Rockville earned the 10<sup>th</sup> spot in EPA's program for kWh usage. However, electricity rates have changed this year and standard offer service rates have decreased. There is now a premium paid for green power. John

Becker described that his HOA will be bidding for their electricity contract soon. A list of Maryland electricity vendors and rates is available to help in the decision process:  
<http://www.opc.state.md.us/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=eKv1Ae6tcgQ%3d&tabid=71>

#### **4. Sustainable Maryland Certified (SMC)**

- A resolution to participate in the SMC program is scheduled for the 10/24 Mayor and Council meeting. Should the Mayor and Council approve the resolution, then the Environment Commission will invite partners and advisors to serve on a Green Team to coordinate a community survey and action plan for certification.
- The community sustainability survey would be proposed for January. The Commission is developing a draft for comment. The survey could be publicized online, social media, school “backpack announcements, senior center, the Chamber, and neighborhood newsletters, etc.
- Clark Reed discussed the potential to pursue the Maryland Green School action item. He is working with the Twinbrook Elementary to see if they can meet the criteria by April 1st: environmental curricula, environmental performance, and community partnership.

#### **5. Residential Solar**

- Herb Winkler forwarded a 2010 article about his solar array: (<http://rockvillecentral.com/2010/03/herbs-solar-powered-house.html/>).
- Members thought it was a good case study and that additional information is needed to answer the basic questions for considering solar.
- Action item: Erica Shingara will combine information from the case study, the solar roundtable discussion, and Rotraut Bockstahler’s outline for a draft article for the committee to review.

#### **6. Member News / Announcements / Upcoming Events**

- Free Residential Composting Seminar on October 19, 2011 at 7 p.m. at the Croydon Creek Nature Center.
- A public information meeting for the Rock Creek Watershed Study will be held at the Glenview Mansion on November 9<sup>th</sup> from 7-8:30 p.m.

#### **7. Wrap-up and Adjourn**

The next SDEC meeting is tentatively scheduled for **Tuesday, November 15, 2011** at Rockville City Hall. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:10 pm.